



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

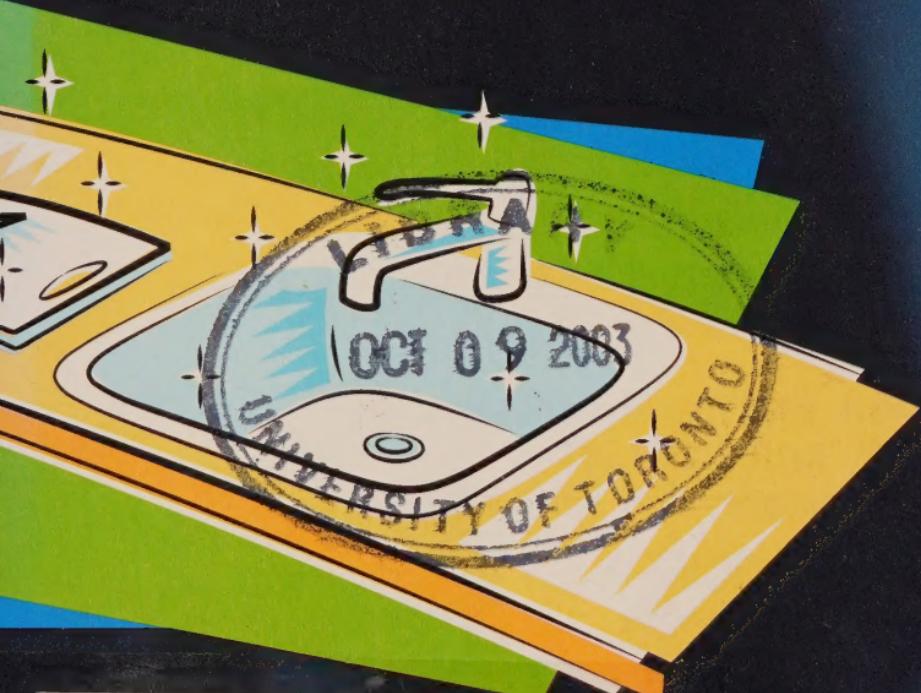
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Food Safety Tips on **E. coli 0157:H7**



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Food SAFETY

Canada

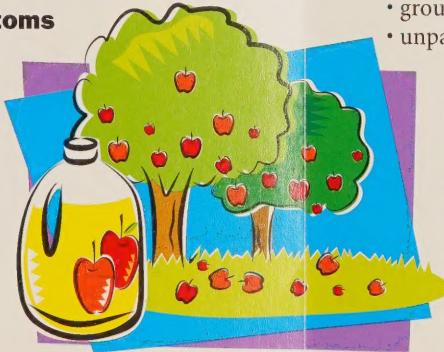
Your burger's done at 71°C (160°F)! Use a food thermometer to check

What are *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7 and Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome?

- *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7 (*E. coli* 0157:H7) is a bacteria. It is found in the intestines of cattle, poultry and other animals.
- *E. coli* 0157:H7 bacteria can be transferred to the meat when an animal is slaughtered. *E. coli* 0157:H7 can contaminate ground beef because the grinding process can spread bacteria throughout the meat.
- *E. coli* 0157:H7 bacteria can be transferred from contaminated food to person, from contaminated food to other food, from contaminated person to another person or from contaminated person to food. This can happen during food preparation and cooking.
- You can also get *E. coli* 0157:H7 from touching something infected people have touched, if they have poor hygiene.
- *E. coli* 0157:H7 can cause an unusual type of kidney failure and blood disorder called hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS).
- There are several other strains of *E. coli* that can also infect people.

What are the symptoms of *E. coli* 0157:H7 infection?

- *E. coli* 0157:H7 produces a toxin (poison) in people that can break down the lining of the intestines and damage the kidneys.



- Some people who become infected with *E. coli* 0157:H7 do not get sick at all. Some people have flu-like symptoms. Some people have severe, life-threatening symptoms.
- People may develop stomach cramps, vomiting and a mild fever within 2 to 10 days of eating food contaminated with *E. coli* 0157:H7. Some people may have bloody diarrhea (hemorrhagic colitis).
- Most people recover within 7 to 10 days.
- About 10% of people who become infected with *E. coli* 0157:H7 develop HUS. Most of these are children and the elderly. Some people with HUS may need blood transfusions and kidney dialysis. Some may have seizures or strokes. Most people with HUS get better. However, some people die from HUS. Others live with side effects like permanent kidney damage.

Where could I come in contact with *E. coli* 0157:H7?

- *E. coli* 0157:H7 bacteria has been found in:
 - ground beef
 - unpasteurized (raw) milk and milk products
 - untreated water
 - raw fruits and vegetables
 - unpasteurized apple juice/cider

How can I protect myself and my family?

- Wrap raw meat properly before you put it in the refrigerator. Place meat in container on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator to keep meat juice from dripping on other food.



- Always thaw ground beef in the refrigerator. Or thaw in the microwave just before cooking.
- Always marinate meats in the refrigerator. Prepare extra marinade and set some aside so you can baste meat with marinade that has never touched raw meat.
- Always cook ground beef until it reaches a minimum internal temperature of 71°C (160°F). Use a food thermometer to check.
- Never put cooked meat on the same plate that you used for raw meat. People often make this mistake when barbecuing.
- Wash your hands well with soap and hot water for 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat. Clean and sanitize all cooking equipment, utensils and work surfaces with a mild bleach solution (use 5 ml/1 tsp. bleach in 750 ml/3 cups water) after preparing raw meat. Rinse with clean water. Let air dry if possible, or use clean kitchen towels or paper towels.
- Drink only pasteurized milk. Only eat cheese and other dairy products that have been made from pasteurized milk.
- Drink water from approved sources.
- Wash all raw fruits and vegetables before you prepare and eat them.
- Drink juice/cider that is shelf-stable or labeled as pasteurized or boil unpasteurized juice/cider before you drink it.



What is foodborne illness?

Foodborne illness is the term used when people get sick from eating contaminated food. Food can be contaminated by viruses, bacteria and parasites. People often call foodborne illness ‘food poisoning’. People may think that they have the flu when they have ‘food poisoning’ because the symptoms can be almost the same. Some symptoms of foodborne illness are stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and fever.

Safeguarding Canada's Food Supply

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is the Government of Canada's regulator for food safety, animal health and plant protection.

Food safety and consumer protection are essential to the health of Canadians. At the CFIA, the safety of Canada's food supply is central to everything we do.

For more information on food safety, visit the Canadian Food Inspection Agency website at

www.inspection.gc.ca

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